

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ABIDJAN 0648

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP, PGOV, IV, CG

SUBJECT: IVORY COAST: VISIT OF CONGOLESE PRESIDENT N'GOUABI

REF. DAKAR 0335 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY. PRESIDENT N'GOUABI ENDED A FOUR-DAY OFFICIAL VISIT TO IVORY COAST ON JANUARY 19 THAT CAN ONLY BE CLASSIFIED AS A SUCCESS FOR BOTH PARTIES. GOIC HAD DEMANDED THAT N'GOUABI REFRAIN FROM HIS USUAL REVOLUTIONARY RHETORIC DURING THE VISIT. IN RETURN FOR HIS SILENCE ON THESE MATTERS HE WAS PRESENTED WITH EXTENSIVE TOURS AND BRIEFINGS ON IVORIAN AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND WAS PROMISED IVORIAN ASSISTANCE TOWARD ACHIEVING SIMILAR RESULTS IN CONGO. N'GOUABI WAS OBVIOUSLY IMPRESSED WITH IVORIAN ACHIEVEMENTS AND FELT MUCH COULD BE DONE TO IMPROVE THE PROFITABILITY OF THE CONGOLESE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR. END SUMMARY.

1. CONGOLESE PRESIDENT MARIEN N'GOUABI ENDED HIS FOUR-DAY OFFICIAL VISIT TO IVORY COAST ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 19. HE ARRIVED THE PREVIOUS WEDNESDAY IN ABIDJAN AND WAS AFFORDED ALL THE HONORS ANY VISITING CHIEF OF STATE COULD HOPE TO
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RECEIVE IN IVORY COAST. THE AFTERNOON OF THE 15TH WAS

DECLARED A HOLIDAY AND THE PDCI (DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF IVORY COAST) DID ITS PART IN INSURING THAT THE MOTORCADE ROUTE WAS LINED WITH ENTHUSASTIC WELL-WISHERS. FOR THE PREVIOUS THREE DAYS THE PRESS WAS DRUMMING UP PUBLICITY WHILE THE CITY FATHERS WERE BUSY HANGING CONGOLESE AND IVORIAN FLAGS ON EVERY PUBLIC BUILDING IN THE CITY. THE ARRIVAL CEREMONIES WERE BROADCAST LIVE ON TELEVISION IN SPITE OF THE FACT THAT IVORIAN TV USUALLY DOES NOT BROADCAST IN THE AFTERNOONS.

2. THAT EVENING PRESIDENT AND MME HOUPHOUET HOSTED A STATE DINNER AT THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE FOR THEIR CONGOLESE VISITORS. AFTER THE DINNER N'GOUABI WAS PRESENTED TO THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS. FOR THE FOLLOWING THREE DAYS THE ENTOURAGE SPENT ITS TIME TOURING ABIDJAN, DOUAKE AND YAMOOUSSOUKRO.

3. THE CENTRAL THEMES OF THE TRIP WERE POLITICAL PARTY UNITY AND AFRICAN SOLIDARITY AND BROTHERHOOD, ALL INTERSPERSED WITH EXTENSIVE TOURS OF AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND FOOD PROCESSING PROJECTS. N'GOUABI EXHIBITED A CONTINUING INTEREST IN IVORY COAST'S DEVELOPMENT IN AGRICULTURE AND STRESSED IN PUBLIC PRONOUNCEMENTS THE NEED FOR GREATER COOPERATION BETWEEN ABIDJAN AND BRAZZAVILLE IN THIS AREA.

4. N'GOUABI LEFT YAMOOUSSOUKRO SUNDAY, JANUARY 19, BY JET AND FOR THE NEXT TWO DAYS THE MEDIA CONTINUED TO PUBLICIZE HIS VISIT AND USED THE OCCASION TO PREACH THE THEMES OF AFRICAN COOPERATION AND SOLIDARITY.

5. COMMENT. EMBASSY DAKAR'S DESCRIPTION (SEE REFTTEL) OF G'NOUABI'S VISIT TO SENEGAL STANDS IN SHARP CONTRAST TO N'GOUABI'S VISIT TO IVORY COAST. BEFORE HIS ARRIVAL AMBASSADOR SMITH WAS TOLD BY IVORIAN MINISTER OF INFORMATION DONA-FOLOGO THAT GOIC PLANNED TO ROLL OUT THE RED CARPET FOR G'NOUABI BUT HAD NO INTENTION OF ALLOWING HIM TO USE HIS VISIT AS A PLATFORM TO EXPOUND HIS REVOLUTIONARY PHILOSOPHIES OR FOR CRITICISM OF IVORIAN FRIENDS. THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE AND ALL OTHER PUBLICITY DEMONSTRATED HOW EFFECTIVE THE IVORIANS WERE IN MAINTAINING N'GOUABI'S SILENCE. IN THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE (WHICH WAS RATHER SHORT) THEY CALLED FOR SOLIDARITY WITHIN THE OAU AND FOR THE ELIMINATION OF COLONIALISM ON THE CONTINENT. ON OTHER

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INTERNATIONAL ISSUES THEY CALLED FOR AN END TO THE ECONOMIC GAME THAT THE DEVELOPED WORLD IS PLAYING AT THE EXPENSE OF THE LDC'S AND FOR THE ADOPTION OF OAU AND UN RESOLUTIONS IN SOLVING THE MIDDLE EAST'S PROBLEMS. IN CONTRAST TO G'NOUABI'S STATEMENTS IN DAKAR, THERE WAS NO MENTION OF SOUTH EAST ASIA. OBVIOUSLY G'NOUABI FELT BY COOPERATING WITH HOUPHOUET HE COULD BE ON THE PROFIT SIDE OF THE LEDGER IN ANY JOINT ECONOMIC VENTURES UNDERTAKEN WITH GOIC. HE WAS IMPRESSED WITH IVORIAN AGRICULTURAL

DEVELOPMENT AND DESIRES TO SEE SOME OF THE SAME OCCUR IN CONGO.
AT LEAST PUBLICLY N'GOUABI PLAYED THE ROLE OF THE
YOUNG AFRICAN LEADER PAYING HOMMAGE TO A REVERED AFRICAN
LEADER. HIS WILLINGNESS TO PLAY THIS ROLE DEMONSTRATES
HIS ABILITY TO CONTROL HIS EMOTIONAL BRAND OF POLITICS IF
HE BELIEVES THE PRICE IS RIGHT.
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